



# The Costly Fallout from Falling

Staying healthy can help keep you financially healthy, too. Did you know that nearly 1,000 people a day fall and break their hip? It's sad to say that this fact is correct, and it gets even worse. According to the *Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons* nearly 9,000 people die every year as a result of their fall. Many times the hip injury requires surgery and if you are older with multiple health conditions then complications can become fatal. At the very least, you will be headed towards a challenging recuperation that can play havoc with your once active lifestyle.

But it does not have to be that way. Studies show that simple changes in the home can prevent one out of every three home accidents among the sixty-plus generation. So let's take a walk through your home with our *Fall Proof Safety Check* to reduce your risk for falling. Of course, there is more you can do to reduce your risk of falling than just making changes in your home. Exercise, taking calcium, getting your vision checked, taking time to get out of bed and finding out if the medication you take will make you dizzy – are all preventive steps that you can take to safeguard yourself from taking a fall.

## Fall-Proof Safety Check

### In the kitchen:

- ☐ Make use of “Lazy Susans” so that dishes, pots, pans and cooking materials that you use most frequently are easy to reach. You do not want to reach too high or too low to throw you off balance.
- ☐ Place non-skid rugs beneath the sink and the refrigerator to soak up splattered liquids to prevent your floor from becoming slippery when wet.
- ☐ Move items in kitchen cabinets and the refrigerator that are most frequently used to shelves that are easily reached.

### In the bathroom:

- ☐ Make sure that your shower curtain is not held up by a tension rod because if you grab it you could fall with it. Install a strong metal rod that is bolted to the wall.



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Updated: April 2006

# Consumer Tool Chest



## Financial Security Tools

- ☐ Install grab bars in the shower and/or tub. If you have trouble getting on and off the toilet, get a raised toilet seat and install handrails alongside the toilet.
- ☐ Attach a liquid soap dispenser in the shower so that you will not slip and fall trying to retrieve a dropped bar of soap.
- ☐ Make sure the water temperature is set at a safe temperature (120 degrees or lower) as many people lose their sensitivity to temperature as they age and can accidentally scald themselves.
- ☐ Place rubber, nonskid strips on the bathroom floor and nonskid bath mats in the tub and or shower.

### Throughout the house:

- ☐ Get rid of throw rugs. Even with carpet tape, it is still too easy to slip a shoe under the rug and trip. It also throws off your depth perception as you refocus from bare floor to carpet.
- ☐ All stairways should have handrails on both sides.
- ☐ Place brightly colored adhesive tape on the edge of steps, so you can see the contrast and know you are at the edge of each step. If the steps are carpeted, consider pulling it up if it is old, frayed or easy to slip on.
- ☐ Install sound or movement-activated lights that go on and off automatically during the night if you should need to go to the bathroom.
- ☐ Get rid of clutter and small tables or furniture in hallways.
- ☐ Make sure that all cords and wires are close to the wall or tape them down.
- ☐ Wear sturdy shoes that have thin, non-slip soles and be very careful of sneakers that have thick soles which can cause you to trip.



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